

COMING TO CHRIST.

A Sermon by the Rev. Henry Martin Scudder, M.D., D.D., Missionary to India. Delivered Sunday Evening, May 29th, 1859. Being the last of the series of Sunday Evening Services at the Academy of Music. Revised.

THIS evening's service, as you are aware, closes the series of Sabbath-evening discourses in this house. I feel that no words can be more appropriate to the occasion than those which you will find recorded in Matthew ii. 28-30 :

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

These are very kind, sweet words. I think no one can read, or hear, them with indifference. There is a high and holy beauty dwelling in them, as fragrance dwells in flowers. Many generations have passed away since they were uttered; but down through the long line of centuries they have come to us unimpaired, and this night they lack nothing of their original freshness and attractive power. There is about them nothing that is earthly; they

are heavenly; there is in them a divine love stronger than the love of a brother, and more gentle and tender than the affection of a mother. They offer that which is very needful to us. Is there any one here who has never breathed a sigh for rest? Where, in the entire compass of the English language, is there a word which expresses more than this monosyllable, *REST*? We long for it; it meets our condition and the yearnings of our souls.

Let us consider—

I. WHO IS THE SPEAKER.

Let me ask, dear friend, is the Being who uttered these words a stranger to you? Would you not become acquainted with Him? How gently and lovingly He speaks. Who is He? He speaks with the calm authority of conscious sufficiency. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and I will give you rest." Can this be the utterance of a mere man? Can a man stand up, and looking upon the vast world of human beings, both in the present, and in every age of coming time, say, "Come unto *ME*, and I will give you rest." What supposition could be more monstrous than this, that a *man* should speak thus? Or can it be an angel, or some higher creature, if there be such, standing at the pinnacle of creation? No, it can not be. Where, among God's servants, in any world, could be found one who would venture to arrogate the use of such language? There could not be a loftier height of disloyalty than that, or a depth of treachery more profound. The higher the creature, the greater the blasphemy of such an invitation. In the circle of creation which surrounds God, he who stands nearest has the greatest capacity to know and feel that there is immeasurable distance between the infinite and the finite, and the holiest and the wisest would be the first to shrink from assuming the place of the living God, and uttering our text, "Come unto *ME*, and I will give you rest." No one but God can use this language.

You will notice that it is spoken with perfect naturalness and ease; and if you will look back into the Old Testament, you will

find that these words of Christ are identical with those which Jehovah himself uses. In the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, and the twenty-second verse, are recorded these words:

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

Observe the exact correspondence of the text: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Who can avoid the conclusion, that the Jehovah of the Old is the Jesus of the New Testament?

Examine the text, for a moment. Jesus here sets Himself forth as the sole object of faith; he says, "Come unto *me*." He sets himself forth as the lawgiver; he says, "Take *my* yoke upon you." He speaks of Himself as the magnet of attraction to the human race—as the author of peace to disquieted mortals. Such language can come honestly from no lips but those of Deity. You will see a perfect consistency in this regard throughout the Scriptures. Jesus continually speaks thus of Himself. He says, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger." He says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." He says, "I am the resurrection and the life." Again, "I am the life of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness."

I ask you to be honest, and if you have had doubts in respect to the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, look candidly at this one text to-night. It shall be to you a sun dissolving the mist of your prejudices. The Bible contains many such texts, even as the milky way contains many suns. There is a galaxy of proof for this fundamental doctrine of the divinity of the Redeemer; but I now ask you to look at this one verse. It shall teach you both His divinity and humanity. When He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," *that* is the voice of Deity. When He says, "I am meek and lowly in heart," *that* is the voice of a man whose heart beats in sympathy for his fellow-men. There is no theory, no interpretation, that will fit this passage save this—that Jesus Christ is God over all, blessed forever;

and that He, having taken our nature, stands forth as our Mediator, the God-man. The speaker, then, is our God, and at the same time our elder brother.

Let us ask—

II. TO WHOM DOES HE SPEAK?

I answer—1. *That Christ here addresses the great frame of nature.* Throughout the domain of nature there are groanings and travailings; whether in volcanic fires that seethe beneath our feet, or in tempests that, ever and anon, with lightning glare and thunder hoof, sweep over our sky, nature is laboring. The curse of sin that came upon the earth is universally manifest. Nature looks upon us with weary countenance in her dreary desert, and the waste wildernesses are the features of her sorrowing face. Thorns and thistles grow spontaneously the world over. Everywhere nature is heavily laden. All her woes came by the first Adam. The second Adam is the great Physician. The diseased earth must come to His feet to be healed. He calls the physical world to Himself.

Do you not know that the truth, as it is in Jesus, not only achieves spiritual results upon the earth, but through and with them, likewise, effects physical ameliorations; and every physical improvement which the truth works out is the coming of the physical world to Jesus Christ. By sure, predestined steps there shall, at the last, come the promised time when man shall again be loyal, and the earth recovered. Then the desert shall blossom as the rose, and the lion shall lie down with the lamb.

In that great day of history, when the universal song over humanity everywhere newborn shall be uttered in full chorus by angelic bands above, men themselves, upon the earth, shall not only mingle in that melody, but shall also sing literal harvest songs over a fruitful globe physically redeemed. The earth shall come to Christ physically; and every land and every isle shall be an Eden. He calls it to Himself.

2. The person who stands on the platform being nobler than the platform itself, if Jesus Christ calls the frame of nature to Himself, much more does He call *the human race*.

The whole human race is laboring. Every system of false religion is a scheme of labor. Look at the many religions in the earth; consider how much thought, anxiety, emotion, will, and work are embodied in each one of those systems. As the preacher tells us in Ecclesiastes i. 8: "All things are full of labor; man can not utter it." The human race is burdened; every man and woman carries a burden. While the intellect of the world toils, the heart of the world groans. This labor of man in constructing false religions—what is it? It is not like the cheerful labor of successful enterprise, but it is profitless, sickening toil, and it is pregnant with miseries everlasting. Man, conceited and self-righteous, everywhere thus laboring, Jesus Christ calls us to Himself.

I wish you to mark the voice of the text in regard to the missionary enterprise—for I shall not forget that I am a missionary of the Gospel. Jesus Christ calls mankind to rest; and as His people are one with Him, even as the branch is one with the vine, a vital necessity constrains them to call the nations to rest. The text, with its winning words, stirs up the Christian heart to make known the invitation of Jesus in every unevangelized land, and to do this is to initiate and prosecute the missionary enterprise.

Let us now consider the subjects of Christ's call as found in a narrower circle, even in this assembly. Perhaps some one has strayed in here to-night who will say, "You need not speak to me; I have no interest in this matter; Christ does not call me; I am not one of those who labor or are heavy laden." You are mistaken. He does call you, just as a man standing upon the banks of Niagara, and able to render you aid, would call upon you, if he saw you floating in your skiff unconcernedly toward the fearful precipice. So Jesus calls you, sinner, even though you may be careless about yourself.

But I must pass on to those who *are* interested in the subject of

salvation, and who are laboring; who, in varying degrees, feel a burden, and are attempting, in various methods, to get rid of it. All men, out of Christ, who desire salvation, seek it in the way of their own works. One aim underlies all their efforts. They are striving to establish their own righteousness. As to modes of labor, they diverge into three classes.

First comes the MORALIST, the man who tries to earn his salvation by carefully practicing social and civil duties. He says, "I am kind, honest, and philanthropic, and I expect to go to heaven in this way." I have three things to say to you, my friend. (1.) Suppose that you can exhibit a period of your life in which your attempts were successful, and you fulfilled all your duties to your fellow-men. Previous to that, you did not try or did not succeed, and in either case there is a debt of sin. We have, then, two periods—one of fulfillment, and one of non-fulfillment. In this period of fulfillment you did no more than your duty, for to do more than that is impossible. It therefore suffices only for itself. The sins of the period of non-fulfillment still stand against you. Suppose you were deeply indebted, and should go to your creditor, and say, "True, there is a period of my life in which you have many debts written down against me; but lo, here I can show a period in which I have met all my obligations to you with cash payments, and so, you see, our accounts are square." Would he not laugh you to scorn?

But (2) this is all mere supposition. You can not show any period of life in which you filled full the sphere of obligations to your fellow-men, in thought, feeling, and action, with no fault of omission or commission, and no blemish of motive. Not a man in this house will venture to affirm that, unless he is ignorant, or dishonest, or insane. So the robe which you have spun for yourself, in order to cover the shame of your nakedness, is full of holes, and stained with foul spots, and is not fit even to make into a morning gown in which you may sit alone, much less is it suited to bear the scrutiny of the King's court in which you wish to appear.

And, I say (3), that your whole scheme is an insult to God. You speak of your obligations to your fellow-men, as though they were all. You cast God out, as though he were unworthy or impracticable. Is not God greater than man? Are you under no obligations to Him? By your punctilious attentions to man, do you expect to balance your accounts with God? Here is a man who owes two debts—one to his next-door neighbor, and another and a greater to his king. Paying up the debt he owes his neighbor, he cries out, "I hereby cancel likewise my debt to the king; surely he must now be satisfied." Is such an one a fool in thy sight? Behold, thou, oh, Moralist, art the man. How monstrous an insult to God is thy scheme!

The second class is that of the RELIGIOUS FORMALIST. He imitates the conduct of Christians. He reads the Bible, prays, attends church, and sits down at the Lord's table, and hopes by these external religious actions to win heaven. Perhaps you will ask, Do not Christians practice these things? I reply, yes; but behold the difference! The Christian performs them, because he delights in them; they spring naturally from the instincts of his new heart. He does not practice them with a view to earn salvation by them. He does not rest on them as on the arm of a Saviour. He looks only to Jesus for salvation; he relies solely upon His work, and not upon what he himself has done or can do, and he does these things simply because he loves Christ, and wishes to obey him and be like him. He reads the Bible because he wishes to hear the voice of God speaking to him. He prays, because he likes to speak to God. He goes to church, because it is the house of his Father. He sits at the communion table, because the Master of the feast is his friend and Lord. The Christian loves Jesus, and is united to Jesus, and hence these actions flow naturally from him. In all these things he is obeying Christ's commands with a new, free, loving heart. But how are these things done by the Formalist? They are to him a task; he forces himself up to and through them, because he hopes by them to win the favor of God and earn a place

in heaven. He comes not to the Saviour, but stands afar off, and wishes to make his round of religious deeds his Christ.

Thus, it appears, that the Religious Formalist goes farther than the Moral man, but he is in the same road. He climbs higher, but he is in the same building—a heathen Pagoda, of which SELF is the idol. The Moralist is on the ground floor. The Formalist is in the second story. He adds to the moralist's scheme the idea of God, but the scheme is essentially the same, a system of self-righteousness—of purchasing salvation by one's own works.

The objections urged against the Moralist's project are fatal here also. Suppose, oh, Formalist, that you are able to show a time in which you performed, up to the full measure of obligation, all religious actions. Will the deeds of that period expiate the shortcomings and transgressions of your whole lifetime outside of that period? But you can not point to such a time, when all the religious actions which you are under obligation to perform were fulfilled without defect. And the argument is here cumulative—if the man who relies on his morality can not show a perfect fulfillment of his duties to his fellow-man whom he daily sees, where shall we find the individual who can exhibit the fulfillment of all his obligations to God, whom he has never seen?

Moreover, the Formalist makes no account of the heart. God's Law, however, refers to the heart, as well as to the outer life. It demands a pure spirit, as well as devout external conduct. The latter is the outflowing stream. The former is the fountain. The Formalist's exterior religious life is not perfect, and even if it could be supposed to be so, without reference to the heart, yet within him lives and moves a sinful, corrupt heart, which the Law condemns in all its motions; and where, then, is there any hope of escaping the penalty of that law and of winning heaven by the performance of external religious actions? Nothing can be more hopeless.

The third class is that of the SPIRITUAL STRUGGLER. This man advances further. He recognizes the spiritual world within him-

self. He enters the territory of the heart and attempts to make it what it should be. He strives to excite within himself love, spiritual joy, peace, gentleness, faith, submission, humility, and all holy thoughts, and pious emotions, and gracious purposes. And what shall I say to you who adopt this new phase of self-righteousness? Substantially what I have said before. Should you perfectly succeed from any given date, what account will you render of the years before, in which the opposites of these graces flourished; when sin grew thrivingly in the heart-soil, like luxuriant weeds. But you do *not* succeed. The more you try, the more you fail. It is like trying to pump water out of burning sands. These graces belong to the renewed heart. You can not create them. You, by your efforts, can only discover more and more the helplessness and hopelessness of your ruined condition.

The various projects which men devise to earn salvation will range themselves under one or other of these three specifications. The three are branches of one root, the root of self-righteousness. From what has been said, it clearly appears: (1.) That though those schemes should be faultlessly fulfilled, they could not blot out even one from the long and melancholy list of man's transgressions of heart and life. (2.) That when we scrutinize these schemes, as reduced to practice by their adherents, we find a performance full of gaps of omission and fissures of commission. So that their road to heaven is a road abounding in great chasms. No one can drive his vehicle over it—he will be dashed to pieces. (3.) That these performances are fatally tainted. Man has a wicked heart, and its poison pervades every action; so that his performance, which is put forth for life, is like unto a loaf of bread through which arsenic is diffused. Death is there.

In closing this part of my subject, I additionally observe, that these schemes are schemes of *folly* and *rebellion*.

Of folly. Jesus proffers you His own righteousness, a spotless robe. It is the only one that can entitle you to admission into the palace of the eternal King. But you refuse it. You prefer the

garment of your own self-righteousness. It is soiled, so that no washing can cleanse it. It is rank, so that nothing can sweeten it. It is worn and torn beyond all mending. You have diligently put patch upon patch. Each has made the rents worse. It has swelled into a hideous mass of filthy rags. What you want is a new garment, clean, whole, and beautiful. Such Jesus offers to you, and as a free gift. But you cling to your old, dirty, wind-stricken tatters. What folly!

They are schemes of *rebellion*. God has declared in the Holy Scriptures, with a clearness that no child can misunderstand, that you can not be saved by your works, and he has commanded you to submit to Jesus and receive his righteousness. You, by your schemes, reply, "No, I know better than God does. I will not have His way. I will pursue my own." Thus choosing your schemes as the way of salvation, you show yourself a double rebel; a rebel by transgression of God's moral law, and a rebel over again by disobeying the evangelic commandment to yield to Jesus.

Ye who are experimenting with these schemes are laboring, and it is fruitless toil, for still are ye heavy laden. Oh, this striving to earn salvation is a wretched business! Are you weary of it? Then Jesus calls you. Are there none here who feel that sin is a burden, which they can not remove? Adam felt it to be so, even after a single transgression, for in fear and shame he crouched in the thicket, and hid low in the bushes the brow that never before blushed at the glance of Deity. Tell me, are not your sins a burden, a fearful burden? Look back on your past life. Are not your sins like mountains in bulk, like sea-shore sands and forest leaves in number? Silently but swiftly the snow-flakes accumulate on the mountain summits to an avalanche, which, in due time, thunders down the slope, and the traveler who has ventured into its path is swept into sudden death. Even so your sins are accumulating on the peaks of divine justice, and when God speaks, they shall sweep you away to a hopeless doom. Do you wish to escape, while yet there is opportunity? Do you feel your own impotence?

Do you discern your need of One mighty to deliver, and gracious to redeem? Then listen. You are the one whom Jesus calls to-night.

Let us now notice—

III. WHAT JESUS TELLS SUCH TO DO.

Three things.

1. *His first direction is, "Come unto me."* He says, "Oh, sinner, I lived, and died, and rose again for you. The law you broke and dishonored, I kept and glorified. The penalty you deserve, I bore. The justifying righteousness which you need, I have wrought out. I am ready to pay your debt, to clothe your naked, shivering soul with vestments of righteousness. Come, then, come unto me."

Oh, thou laboring and heavy laden sinner, wilt thou not look at this wonderful life and death of Jesus? He stood as a substitute for the sinner. He told the Law to look to Him. The Law seized Him. It inflicted on Him a life of sorrow. It stretched Him on the bloody cross. Then the sun in the heavens hid his face with shame and grief; and the earth, sensitive to its Maker's sorrows, quaked with strange terror; and the rocks, not so hard as human hearts, were rent asunder; and all Nature veiled her face in darkness and wept. This expiatory death of Jesus Christ is the great central fact of all history, the study and joy of all eternity. Are there not many present here whose chief joy is their knowledge that Jesus died and rose for them; and on this recreant earth, are there not millions who lie down every night and rise up every morning with the gladdening and sustaining assurance that in and with Jesus they shall live forever? This Jesus calls you. Every feature of His countenance glows with love. Kind and earnest and true are his words. Unspeakably tender is His invitation. Come, for if you do not, you must fall into an eternal hell.

Jesus says, "COME," and to come *to* Him implies a coming *away from* something.

You must come away from all your sinful courses. You must repent of, and abandon every outward and inward sin. Say unto Christ, "Thou art my Lord. I have wronged Thee. I am sorry and ashamed. From this hour, in Thy strength, I will forsake all sin and follow Thee."

Again, *you must come away from self*, from all those moral and religious and spiritual forms of self-righteousness which I have attempted to describe. I have shown you that it is impossible for you, no matter how careful and pains-taking you may be, to develop any perfect form of moral, or religious, or spiritual life. But if you come to Jesus, you shall be renewed, and, by His grace, He will work in you a true morality, and a genuine religious and spiritual life. All these things are the effect of union with Jesus, and are unattainable previous to such union. If any man exhibits a form of morality, or religion, or spirituality, without first coming to Christ, that form is but a caricature, an imperfect, unsubstantial, worthless imitation, like the gaudy glitter of tinsel for fine gold, like a pearl made of paste, like a diamond manufactured of glass. Cease, then, at once, from the ways of self-righteousness. You can not make yourself better. If you wait for that, you will never come to Jesus. The more you try, the worse you will get. Come to Him, just as you are, and He will make you better. There is no other way. Suppose a sick man should say, "I am very ill, and I know a physician of great skill, but I must, in some way, try to make myself better before I apply for his aid. When I succeed in this, I will apply to him." Would you not consider him insane? Cease, then, from your foolish attempts. Say, "Jesus, Master, here at Thy feet I lie. Thy work of atonement must avail for me. Thy grace must make me better." Come as you are, and He will heal you. Come as the leper did, and He will, with a touch, bestow health upon you.

To come to Christ is to *commit ourselves wholly, with faith, to Him*. It is often difficult to make men understand this. They are looking out for some *great* act of their own, which they think they

must perform; and this is so simple, so very simple. When the bitten Israelites were told to look up at the brazen serpent, in order to be healed, no doubt some of them perished, exclaiming, "What is the use of doing that? that is too simple, altogether too simple." So in this matter of coming to Jesus, men stumble at its simplicity, at the very thing which should recommend it to them.

Allow me to repeat this great truth. Coming to Jesus is *ceasing from the attempt to save ourselves, and casting ourselves entirely on Him*. Let me illustrate this. Yonder is a criminal. Conscious of guilt, and terrified at the impending penalty, he flies. Armed officers are on his track. The pursuit is keen, and they near him. He tries, in various ways, to escape. All is in vain. He becomes weak, and faint, and desponding. They gain fast upon him. He looks behind, and sees the sword already uplifted to cut him down. He can almost feel the hot breath of the avenger. He is full of terror. The last, weak flutter of hope has ceased in his heart. Suddenly a royal personage, of noble demeanor and benevolent bearing, steps into the path before him, and, opening his arms, says, "Come to me; I, by personal sacrifices, have found a way by which I can settle the claim that the righteous law has upon you. Fall upon this protecting breast of mine, and the officers will not touch you." What would the criminal do? Would he not forsake his attempts to save himself, and trusting the sweet words, cast himself into the opened arms, to lie motionless, secure, and happy, upon the sheltering bosom of his deliverer? Even so is the case with you. You have broken God's law. You are a criminal in His government. The law threatens you. You have tried one way and another to save yourself. You can not accomplish it. You are perishing. Jesus appears in your path. He says, "Come unto me. The claims of the law against you I will settle." What are you to do? Simply this. Stop trying to make yourself better. Cease your self-righteous efforts to work out your own salvation. Believe the loving words of Jesus. Commit yourself wholly to Him. This is coming to Christ. When you do this, you are saved.

2. *His second direction is, "Take my yoke upon you."* Some of you, perhaps, will resent this word "*yoke*," and say, "I do not wish any yoke; I do not believe in yokes." Does this word offend you? Then consider that *all wear some yoke*. You wear one. Do you know what your yoke is? The governing impulse of your life, the commanding motive which shapes your course, is your yoke. There are some who wear the harlot's yoke; some, the drunkard's yoke; some, the yoke of the profane swearer, or of some other evil practice. There are some whose yoke is the inordinate love of fame. There are some whose yoke is the love of money; and the yoke of everybody, in general terms, is selfishness; and all these are the devil's yokes. By rejecting Christ's yoke, therefore, you do not escape a yoke, but simply choose and wear one that is harder.

Is the idea of restraint, conveyed in the term "*yoke*," irksome and displeasing to you? If so, you show that you have reflected very imperfectly on this subject. The idea of restraint is a most wholesome one. It enters largely into every scheme of education. What would the family be without restraint? What would a school, or any individual life, or a government, be without restraint? Strange, indeed, if there should be no restraint in the household which Christ is training for the life eternal! Its absence would be a radical and fatal imperfection. Restraint molds character, and directs it to erect, healthy, proportionate, beautiful growth.

Look yonder, there is a ship. The man at the helm guides it with wistful eye and firm hand. From deck to masthead there is an orderly disposition of all things. The ship is restrained from latent rocks, and lee shores, and treacherous quicksands. She is coming into the haven. Her sails are set. Her streamers float out upon the breeze. There is a band of music upon her deck, and the sailors are singing, "*homeward bound*," and the gallant ship leaps in glad obedience over the path marked out for her. There is a symbol of restraint.

Behold! Bearing away in the distance is another ship; no hand at the helm; the ropes loose; the sails hanging in strips; the ensign a tattered rag; wild revelry among the crew, and the ship is drifting toward the fatal rocks or the destructive vortex. There is a symbol of non-restraint. Object not, therefore, on this account.

Understand what this yoke is. It is a yoke only on the NECK OF SIN, affording opportunity for the development of spiritual liberty and purity. Whereas the yoke which the impenitent man wears is precisely the opposite of this. It is a yoke which restrains from holiness; while on the neck of evil there is laid a free rein which gives it untrammelled scope, so that the only free man is he who wears the yoke of Christ; because thereby he is separated out from the slavery of sin, and is made free unto holiness.

To bear Christ's yoke is lovingly to obey His commands.

This yoke is easy. Day by day, as it is borne, it becomes easier. The wearing of it argues, indeed, severe conflict with all evil personalities and forces; but by the grace of the Spirit whom Christ bestows, conflict ever waxes into victory. Like all habits, it continually becomes easier. Here is a tree of ugly, crooked growth. The gardener fastens a rope to it, which, being attached to some strong sustaining object, and daily tightened, gradually draws the tree toward a right line. At first the pressure is felt by the tree, but soon it forms the habit of vertical growth. It no longer bends in misshapen forms toward the ground. Now it is easy for it to shoot its branches heavenward. The yoke is easy. So said the wisest man of the Old Testament,* "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And so, also, said the gentlest spirit of the New Testament,† "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous."

3. *His third direction is, "Learn of me."* As soon as we come to Christ a process of education begins. We place a very high

* Proverbs iii. 17.

† 1 John v. 8.

value on that form of education which respects this earthly life alone. We take great pains to qualify ourselves for a mortal sphere. But here is a discipline which respects the life to come, also the sphere of the immortals. How much more important!

Of this education, Jesus' teachings constitute the substance, and Jesus himself is the standard, and the Holy Spirit is the instructor, applying to us the things of Christ, and assimilating us to His character. We must submit ourselves to Jesus in doctrine and example. We must experience the one, and illustrate the other. To "*learn of Jesus*" is thus to be conformed to Him, and this is sanctification.

"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." Observe the argument here. Men are unwilling to come to Jesus, because it involves self-humbling. They think they sacrifice their manhood by becoming meek and lowly; that is, by laying aside pride and self-sufficiency, and by becoming submissive to God in all things. Such Jesus addresses with an argument unanswerable. He, the Man Christ Jesus, was meek and lowly. Did He lack any element of true manhood? Nay, He was the only true man that ever trod the earth. Every essential of noblest manhood is found in Him. Even infidels have acknowledged this, and admired this sole perfect specimen of humanity. To you, oh, proud man, Jesus speaks, and says, "Come unto me and humble yourself. By doing so you shall not lose, but gain, true manhood, for I am meek and lowly." Surely it is no mark of manhood to swear, to drink, to give way to passion, to live a selfish life. Any fool can do those things with as great facility as you. It is no sign of manhood to swell with pride. Satan can beat you at that business. When you thus swell with pride, you are not more of a man, but more of a devil. To submit to God, to be meek and lowly, like Jesus—these are the elements of true manhood. If a man puts his will under God's will, the everlasting arms are placed beneath and around him, and he is lifted up, face to face, with the Saviour, and becomes a true man.

Notice the sequence and dependence of these three directions of our Lord. He says, in the first place, *Come unto me*. In the second place, *Take my yoke upon you*. In the third place, *Learn of me*. True and beautiful sequence! FAITH, OBEDIENCE, SANCTIFICATION. A golden chain that can not be broken! Where there is faith, there is an outflowing obedience, and through these two cometh sanctification.

See, likewise, how acceding to these three directions introduces us to the Trinity. I, a ruined soul, *come* to Jesus, the Eternal Son, as my Redeemer. By virtue of this union I *obey*, and in the position of a child, look up to the FATHER. Daily I *learn* conformity to Jesus in heart and life, and thus travel the path of progressive sanctification, and this through the grace of the HOLY GHOST.

Let us see—

IV. WHAT JESUS PROMISES TO THOSE WHO YIELD TO HIS DIRECTIONS.

“Rest.” This has ever been the great object of earnest inquiry. Philosophers have sought for it. It can be found only in Jesus. Look at His infinite loving heart, His pattern life, His atoning death, His absolving resurrection, and there behold the fountain of rest. He brought in everlasting redemption. Out of it flows eternal rest.

I remark—

1. *Jesus gives rest from self-righteous toil*. The agonizing attempts of the self-righteous man only sink him deeper and deeper in the mire. A period in Luther’s life will afford us a good illustration. Worn and wasted with flagellations and fastings, he, with an emaciated body and a despairing spirit, lay, almost unconscious, in his cell. A monk entered, and whispered in his ear that clause of the creed which says, “I believe in the forgiveness of sins.” Over the deep gloom of Luther’s soul that one sentence shot like the first ray of light upon the primeval waters when darkness was upon the face of the deep. He abandoned his works as a ground

of hope, and trusted in Jesus as the Forgiver of sin and the Author of salvation; and he found peace, and rose up to serve his Lord with a free spirit. Oh, ye moralists, and formalists, and strugglers, hear the voice of the Son of God. He says to each one of you, "O man, why dost thou vainly strive to do that which thou canst not do, and I can. Thou art not the Saviour; I am. To redeem is my work. Trust no longer to thy works, but trust me; and in my promise be at rest." When the soul believes, this is its first upward accent of faith—it cries out, "Even so, Lord Jesus. In Jehovah Jesus have I righteousness and strength."

2. *Jesus gives rest from internal disquietudes.* The unconverted heart is an ever-tossing sea.

There is within, *the accusing conscience*. Its sting, how sharp! Its crimination, how bitter! Its scourge, how relentless! Conscience utters and re-utters the voice of the dishonored law through our souls. Our heart turns into a sepulcher of hope where those tones of conscience elicit naught but echoes of despair. Guilt lies an intolerable burden on us. Remorse places its skeleton fingers upon our heart-strings, and they wither. There was a great man who died in this country. As he was dying, he ordered the door locked, that his physician might not be able to leave him, and taking a card which bore his own name, he, with a pencil, wrote on its reverse a single word, and summoning the physician to his bedside, he handed it to him, and said, "Doctor, read that." The word was, REMORSE. But when the soul takes hold of Jesus, it hears Him saying, "I have borne thy transgressions; I have blotted them out. I have forgiven thee. I have washed thee, and clothed thee. From the realm of law I have transferred thee to the territory of grace." Then the soul feels that Jesus, with His beautiful feet, is walking over the heart's billows. The sea falls, the wind is assuaged, and there is a great calm. Then the soul feels that Jesus has shined into it. Even as, when the broad daylight is let into a deserted and closed-up habitation, the bats which had congregated there flee away, so do remorseful thoughts

flee from this soul into which the Sun of Righteousness has shined ; and instead of an accusing conscience, there comes a sweet spirit of penitence, full of gentleness, peace, and joy.

There is also the terrible shadow which the coming judgment casts aforehand upon our path. The sinful soul trembles until it hears the Son of the Blessed saying, "I bought thee with a price—with my own blood. Thou belongest to me. Hell can not catch thee. All the devils can not snatch thee out of my hand. I shall wear thee forever as a jewel upon my neck. Thou art mine for eternity." Bunyan has sketched the picture for us. A Pilgrim groans beneath his burden. At last his weary eye catches sight of the Cross. The bands that held the load to his back are sundered ; the burden rolls away, and he never sees it again.

3. *Jesus gives, what I may call, the Rest of fellowship.*

Rest from fruitless laboring and rest from agitation, though of incomputable value, are of a negative character. But the Rest has likewise a positive side. The soul that comes to Jesus not only ceases from vain toil, and escapes from torturing anxiety, but it enters into a life of sweet communion with Jesus. It walks with Him. It gazes on Him. It reposes in Him. It becomes increasingly like Him. This new life of the soul is positive, and it sweetly overflows with a peace and heavenly serenity indescribable. And as, in its impenitent state, the foreshadowings of judgment fell, dark and baneful upon this soul, now as it stretches up, in all its aspirations and hopes, to its eternal Lord enthroned in heaven, the assurance of everlasting bliss floods it with a gushing stream of glory.

Oh, how happy, now, is this soul ! It is like a stream moving swiftly and cheerily, and Jesus is the SUMMER SUN looking down into it. Every drop, as it leaps on in gladness, holds in its pellucid little bosom a small but distinct and lovely image of the glorious sun. So each thought and emotion and purpose of the believing soul—though they are multitudinous as the drops of that stream—contains an image, definite and radiant, of Jesus, the Sun of Truth

and Love. There is no darkness in the crystal depths of that stream-life. It is everywhere filled with sunlight.

Come, ye that labor and are heavy laden. There is rest in Jesus. Where can the babe find repose, but on the mother's breast? Look at it. There is no more beautiful spectacle in the earth. It rests quietly there. With gentle glance it looks trustingly up to meet its mother's eyes. It gazes into those depths of tenderness, and out from those lustrous orbs beam down upon it a world of love. Read that infant's face. Find, if you can, any sign of doubt or perplexity in that little countenance. No, there is only the assurance of perfect trust, of undoubting love. So mayest thou be, oh, sinner, on Jesus' bosom.

Come to Jesus. He invites thee, a guilty, polluted, perishing sinner. He offers thee pardon and purity. He offers to bear thee on His heart, to write thy name on the palms of His hands, to be thy brother and thy friend, thy God and thy Redeemer, to lead thee from Hell's borders through this troublous land to the Heavenly country. Oh, come. Otherwise you will soon sink into Hell, and from thence there is no way of escape.

To you who are in the cleft of the Rock, who possess Christ as your refuge and joy, I will say a word. Cultivate personal acquaintance with Jesus. Let your heart and life be filled with Him. Last year I was on my way home from India. I, one afternoon, came upon deck, and sitting down by the railing of the gallant ship, looked over into the distant West, toward which we were sailing. As I musingly gazed, my eye fastened upon a cloud which hung low upon the horizon. There was nothing attractive about it. It was dull and heavy. It had no borders of light, and its center was a mass of blackness. It was not only unlovely in itself, but communicated gloom to other objects. The ocean surge that heaved below it, was darkened by its sullen shadow. As I was looking, the glorious sun sank into it. Oh, what a change instantaneously took place! The cloud's dark center was now luminous. The mellow light of the evening's sun glowed in every part of it. Its skirts

were fringes and festoons of gold. It beamed with beauty. It sparkled with ten thousand lusters. It burned and flashed with splendors; and down through all its openings there fell cataracts of light, which danced with shining spray on the sea-pavement below. I prayed. I could not help it. "Oh, Lord Jesus, that dark, dismal cloud is my natural heart, black within, and blackening all without. Enter thou into me, dwell in me, thou Sun, then shall my soul shine with thy grace and glory, and pour light upon everything around me."

OH, BELIEVER, LET THIS BE YOUR SOLE AIM, TO BE FILLED WITH JESUS.